

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

The specification as amended below with replacement paragraphs shows added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~.

Please AMEND the paragraph beginning at page 13, lines 23-24, and 30-31 in accordance with the following:

~~And an~~ An application program is stored in a RAM 16 ~~which realizes~~ and operates with a binarizing section 51, an error diffusing section 52, an error diffusion technique changing section 53, a pixel-on-profile detection section 54, a direction-of-profile detection section 55, and an estimating section 56 on the CPU. ~~As it executes~~ When the application program is read out from the RAM 16 via the bus line 12, the CPU 10 functions (described in detail later) as the binarizing section 51, the error diffusing section 52, the error diffusion technique changing section 53, the pixel-on-profile detection section 54, the direction-of-profile detection section 55, and the estimating section 56, ~~thus realizing~~ to realize the halftoning apparatus of the present embodiment.

Please AMEND the paragraph beginning at page 14, lines 13-15 and 20 in accordance with the following:

The program, which instructs the CPU 10 to function as the binarizing section 51, the error diffusing section 52, the error diffusion technique changing section 53, the pixel-on-profile detection section 54, the direction-of-profile detection section 55, and the estimating section 56, ~~is previously~~ recorded in a computer-readable recording medium, such as, in the form of a floppy disc, ~~or a CD-ROM, etc.~~ In use, the ~~The~~ computer reads out the program from the recording medium, and stores the read-out program into an internal storage device or an external storage device. Alternatively the program may be stored in a storage device, such as a magnetic disc, ~~whereupon~~ and the program may be provided from the storage device to the computer over a communications channel or path.

Please AMEND the paragraph beginning at page 17, lines 6-8 in accordance with the following:

In the present embodiment, each pixel to be binarized is defined as having a pixel value in a range of ~~from 0 to 255~~, having a pixel value of either 0 or 255 after halftoned (binarized). ~~This definition would never affect the generality of description~~ However, the present invention is not limited to a pixel value in a range of 0 to 255.

Please AMEND the paragraph beginning at page 37, lines 17-18 and 20 in accordance with the following:

Furthermore, the error diffusion technique changing section 53 changes the error diffusion technique ~~to another~~ when the pixel-on-profile detection section 54 ~~judges~~determines that the noteworthy pixel is a pixel constituting part of the profile of the image (for example, the noteworthy pixel is around the profile). Otherwise the error diffusion technique changing section 53 changes the error diffusion technique for every pixel.

Please AMEND the paragraph beginning at page 53, lines 18 and 20 in accordance with the following:

Furthermore, when the pixel-on-profile detection section 54 detects that the noteworthy pixel is contained in the profile of the input image, the error diffusion technique changing section 53 changes the error diffusion technique (weighting pattern) to another. ~~It is therefore~~Thus, it is possible to localize the undesirable effects (moiré and artifacts), which have been presumably caused by changing the error diffusion technique, to dissolve into the profile, ~~thus~~Thus, minimizing moiré and artifacts in the binary image, ~~which that~~ did not appear in the original (multilevel) image. Further, when the pixel-on-profile detection section 54 detects that the noteworthy pixel is contained in the profile of the input image, the error diffusing section 52 performs the exception process of adding values ($Z/2$), ~~in accordance with the error occurred with the binarizing of the noteworthy pixel,~~ to the values of the unscanned pixels along the profile in the direction detected by the direction-or-profile detection section 55, in accordance with the error occurred with the binarizing of the noteworthy pixel. It is accordingly possible to minimize moiré and artifacts in the binary image, which did not appear in the original (multilevel) image.